

NEWS RELEASE

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ELECTRICITY CONSERVATION EFFORT LAUNCHED
Utah Businesses Urged to “Power Forward”

Utah businesses are being asked to help maintain Utah’s energy independence and keep the state’s electricity rates among the lowest in the nation by joining Gov. Michael O. Leavitt’s new, proactive statewide energy conservation effort.

Called “PowerForward,” the new program represents a partnership of Utah consumers, businesses, power companies, media and state and local government agencies. It is designed to increase awareness of energy conservation issues and opportunities, as well as to encourage electricity conservation efforts during the coming summer months – when electricity consumption peaks – and beyond.

“Right now, Utah’s power system is in great shape,” said Jeff Burks, at the state’s Energy Office. “We’re generating the energy we need, and we’re doing it at a reasonable cost to consumers. But all around us there is evidence to suggest that things may not remain this way if we’re not careful with our energy resources. “The time to begin serious conservation efforts is now,” he continued. “We need to avoid paying high prices on the western wholesale market – money that could be put to better use here at home.”

To that end, the governor is encouraging Utah businesses to become energy conservation partners. Members of the PowerForward team will be meeting with businesses to review ways in which they can conserve energy with practices that make business sense while creating a conservation ethic among employees. “Not only will businesses discover that their conservation efforts have impact on their bottom line, they will also find that it builds teamwork and camaraderie as employees pull together in a worthwhile project,” Burks said. “They will see improvements in the energy and financial performance of their organization, and increased morale as employees see the company taking steps to reduce overhead costs.”

As members of the PowerForward team, businesses will receive educational materials to share with employees and customers, company identification with the team and opportunities to participate in events positioning the company as a conservation leader in the business community.

The PowerForward Campaign

The Power Forward business outreach is just one aspect of a multi-faceted campaign that will help educate Utahns about the need and value of energy conservation. Key messages include:

- Conservation now will help keep Utah self-sufficient and prevent a California-type energy shortage from happening here.
- Conservation now will prevent Utah from paying outrageously high prices on the spot market (10 times or more the cost of Utah-produced electricity). Having to buy power on the spot market contributes to consumer rate hikes down the road.
- Conservation now will help keep Utah's economy healthy and competitive.
- Conservation now will help the bottom line of every business – short-term and long-term.
- Conservation now keeps money in consumer's hands – short-term and long-term.
- Conservation now is simply the right thing to do for individuals, families, businesses and communities – today and for the future.

Power Alert levels – green, yellow, red

The campaign will also provide the media with a daily power conservation alert, designating each day in terms of the level of conservation needed, based on weather predictions, regional power supplies and market power prices. The three familiar colors of a traffic light – green, yellow and red – will indicate a progression of conservation behavior desired from the public. Power alerts will be issued by the state Office of Energy to the media and to anyone who has signed up for the e-mail alert service. Businesses and consumers can sign up by logging onto the website at www.powerforward.utah.gov.

- **Green** days mean that moderate discretionary conservation is advised. Business and residential consumers will be urged to turn off appliances not in use, raise the temperature on thermostats and use high-consumption appliances, such as clothes dryers and dishwashers, during off-peak hours. "Our hope is that the PowerForward campaign will help educate people that simple conservation measures can be adopted easily and with little or no change to their habits and lifestyle," said Burks.
- **Yellow** days signal a strong need for conservation. Consumers will be urged to turn off all unnecessary power users, including air conditioning, if possible. The state Energy Office estimates there will be approximately 25 yellow days this summer.
- **Red** days mean there is an urgent need for conservation to stave off peak, spot-market power purchases and limit the possibility of failures and brownouts. Consumers will be instructed to turn off *all* non-critical power users, while people with health concerns will be urged to seek alternative shelter. Zero to three red days are expected this summer.

"We're not asking Utahns to dramatically change their lifestyle – just to be more sensitive and responsive to energy conservation needs," Burks said. "If everyone helps out just a little, the payoff for us all will be dramatic."

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